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# THE BOLD BLASPHEMER.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

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ABOUT thirty miles from the place in which for a number of years I resided, lived a respectable family, with whom I frequently tarried for a night, and became well acquainted. In that new country there are very few taverns except in towns, and at the house of Mr. W. L. I always received a hearty welcome. He was a frank, open-hearted, hospitable man, and though himself irreligious, was quick-sighted to discern consistency of character, and respected the man who was not ashamed of his religion. I had several times heard him mention that the overseer he had employed for a number of years was sick, and had gone to live nearer to a physician, and he often expressed his fears that "poor T. would not recover." His complaints were of such a nature as almost to preclude the hope.

I asked something about the character of the sick man; and in reply Mr. L. said, "He is the best manager I ever had, but he is the most wicked swearer I ever heard. Bad as I am myself, it chills my very blood to hear him. It seems to me his oaths must come from the lower regions, they are so wicked." I asked, "Does he not seem sensible that he has but a little time to live?" Mr. L. answered, "I told him last week that he did not seem to be getting any better, when he broke out into such a volley of curses, that I was almost afraid to stay in the house. He cursed his Maker for sending upon him such sufferings. He cursed the physicians for not curing him. He cursed me for telling him he would not get well. I never heard such profaneness. It was awful to hear him."

When J. T. found there was no hope of cure, he requested to be carried home to the house of his employer, and here I saw and heard this bold blasphemer. My first interview was very brief, and he attempted no reply to the few words I addressed to him.

In the same neighborhood lived an humble Christian, whom this blasphemer had delighted to ridicule. As soon as good Mr. G. heard of J. T.'s return to the neighborhood, he took his Bible and went over to see him. To the usual inquiry as to his health, he uttered a horrid oath, and said, "You see I am sick, what do you ask me for?" Mr. G. remarked, "Yes, I know you are sick, and I came over to sit awhile and have some talk with you."

T. "Well, if you have any news to tell me, speak out; but don't say a word about your cursed religion. I hate it,"

Mr. G. "Why do you hate religion?"

T. "I never saw any body made better by it."

G. "How is that? Look at James S.——. Is he the same horse-racer, and fighter, and drunkard, he used to be? Is he none the better for his religion?"

T. "Perhaps he is; but there is H. W. over the river, he pretended to become a Christian and there is not a greater cheat in the whole county of W."

G. "It is true he is a professor of religion, but it is to be feared from his conduct, that his heart is not right with God. But you don't throw away all your bank notes because you get now and then a counterfeit. One of the best evidences of the excellency of the Christian religion is, that its enemies expect its professors to be good and holy men. True religion makes those who possess it, good men, good husbands, and fathers, and masters. Now T., you know in your heart this is true."

T. "And you know if I was not sick I could out talk you, and head you up, whichever road you took; but I am too sick to talk, and I don't care about hearing any more preaching."

G. "I make no question of your superior abilities; but I think God has made me a *happier* man than some I know."

T. "I am not a happy man, God knows."

G. "But I can tell what will make you happy."

T. "I know what you are going to say, but say on."

G. Opens his Bible and reads. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "He that, being often reprov'd, and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." "Every one of us shall give an account of *himself* to God."

Even these passages of Scripture, with the few remarks by which they were accompanied, were so offensive, that while

the good man was yet speaking, T. summoned untwonted strength, crawled off his bed, and succeeded in reaching a bed in the adjoining room. Mr. G. was greatly affected, and after some appropriate conversation with Mrs. L. left the house.

The next evening a pious man, who stopped to spend the night, attempted to have some conversation with T., but finding it only irritated him, he desisted. His case was, however, particularly mentioned in family prayer; but it so enraged the sick man, that he seized a chair with the strength of a maniac, and struck his black boy who waited on him.

T.'s situation became every day more and more distressing. As he became conscious he could not live much longer, his hatred to God, to Christians, and to the Bible, increased in malignity. Mrs. L. told him, that so dreadful were his imprecations and curses, she was terrified continually, and feared some heavy judgment would be sent on the whole house. I saw him at this time, and can never forget his appearance. He was emaciated to a skeleton. His sharp black eye had an unnatural fierceness; his voice was deep and hollow. There was a haggardness in his looks, a restless impatience and anguish depicted in his face, such as I never saw before. I was journeying in company with a clergyman, and we stopped to spend the night with our hospitable friend, W. L. I knew our visit would be pleasant to Mrs. L., as she had recently indulged hope in Christ. I knew, too, that she was greatly distressed and worn out by the scene which was passing before her, and that a visit from my friend would be gratifying to her, and as she had told me that his conversation on the importance of preparation for death had been the means of leading her to the Saviour.

We entered the usual sitting-room, and here lay poor T. He could not bear to be left alone, and at his urgent request he had been removed to this room, forgetting that he must go *alone* to try the realities of *eternity*—that he must go *alone* to the judgment-bar of the God he had so often blasphemed.

As soon as conversation could be introduced, my fellow-traveller inquired of T. the nature of his complaints, etc. He was very free to converse on this subject; the more so, probably, because he knew that Mr. W. had some medical knowledge. He related his symptoms, his sufferings, the various remedies used, etc., and finding he was listened to patiently, he seemed quite animated, possibly with the faint hope that something could yet be done for him. Mr. W. endeavored to draw from him whether he had any hope of recovery, and it appeared evident that if he had any, it was very feeble. In a very tender, but solemn manner, Mr. W. then spoke of the

change which awaits all men, of the eternity to which all are hastening, of the judgment-seat before which all must stand, and of the final sentence from which there is no appeal, no escape.

We listened with breathless anxiety, and I trust more than one offered up fervent petitions that this poor sinner might awake to a sense of his danger. It was the first time he had listened so long to any serious conversation without interrupting it. I perceived he was restless, and I had begun to indulge the hope that we should hear him exclaim, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" But, alas, when the question was asked, "Do you feel prepared to stand before the holy and just God, to whose eyes all things are naked and open?" he broke out, saying,

"I am as much prepared as I ever shall be; and if I am not, it is none of your business."

Fixing his eyes full upon him, Mr. W. said, "Young man, let me tell you, you may realize your situation yet before you die; you may wish in vain for the short time which now appears between you and eternity. You can live but a few days; it may be but a few hours. God calls you *now* to repent. But if you *will not*, if you harden your heart and stiffen your neck, you *may call* when God will not hear, you may stretch out your hand when he will not regard, because you have set at naught all his counsel, and despised his reproof."

Mr. W. was asked to lead in family prayer; and here another opportunity offered, which was eagerly embraced, of reaching the case of the sick man. A suitable portion of Scripture was read, a solemn and affecting exhortation given, and then such a prayer offered as it seems to me I never united in before. I thought T. would be melted; but no, he was wroth—he tossed upon his bed—he rolled over—his eyes, Oh I can never forget their expression—he raised himself up—he tossed to one side of the bed and the other—he rose upon his feet—staggered to the door—was caught and seated in a chair in the entry till the prayer was over, and then brought back to his bed.

Nothing more was said to him that night. But it was to him a night of unspeakable horror—his groans we could distinctly hear, intermingled occasionally with shocking oaths. He was evidently afraid to sleep himself, and seemed determined that no one else should.

We took our leave early in the morning, when again a word was addressed to him. A week after, we heard that this bold blasphemer had gone to the eternal world. The circumstances of his death was related to me by Mr. and Mrs. L., and Mr. G.

Two nights after we left him, there was evidently a change for the worse, which he was the first to notice. He had an hour or two of disturbed sleep, and awoke in great distress both of body and mind, crying out, "I shall die; Oh I am dying, and shall go to hell."

Those around him tried to tell him about the Saviour of sinners, but he would not hear. He continued to exclaim, "I am lost—O, I am lost—I shall go to hell."

He requested Mr. W. to be sent for; but as it was thought he could not live through the night, and the distance was great, it was not judged best to send. He then requested old Mr. G. to be sent for. The old man soon came.

Mr. T. "O do pray for me, I must die, and go to hell."

Mr. G. "You must pray for yourself."

T. "I can't."

G. "You can say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,'"

T. "O no I can't. God will not hear such a wretch."

G. "But *my prayers cannot save you*; you must pray for yourself; you must repent of sin. You must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; yield up yourself to him, and through his atoning blood all your sins shall be forgiven."

T. "O do pray—O do pray for me."

His request was complied with; but he continued his groans and exclamations, so that it is probable he heard but little of the prayer. When Mr. G. ceased, he begged him to read the Bible. This was done. If Mr. G. stopped, he would cry out, "do read," or "do pray," or "do talk."

Mr. G. fearing he was depending on him to save him, and knowing that he was rapidly going into eternity, left the house. He told me he could scarcely endure the moans and cries which this blasphemer uttered. They seemed not the cries of a penitent pleading for mercy, but of a soul suffering under God's wrath, and tasting the cup which his own folly and wickedness had mixed. He tossed upon his bed, lashed by the upbraidings of conscience, and there seemed to be realized in his case "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation" from his offended Creator.

He was often urged, during these hours of anguish, to repent now—to pray now. To which he invariably answered, "I can't—'tis too late—too late—'tis too late for me. Take warning by me, O take warning—'tis too late for me." In this manner he continued to groan, and toss, and struggle, till nature was exhausted.

Thus died this bold blasphemer. And now where is he?

Reader, here is a simple narrative of facts: Many persons were acquainted with the man and the manner of his death. I

often heard it talked about while I lived in that part of the country. I am sure that no one who saw him during the last week of his life can ever forget him. Often have I thought of his appearance, and my blood has chilled in my veins. Yet, hardened and wicked as he was, "his sin found him out." Even in this world he felt the gnawings "of the worm that never dies." He had a clear perception of what his sins deserved, and though he trembled and shrunk at the sight, yet no meltings of godly sorrow came over his soul. No change of posture gave ease to his tortured spirit. He had often prayed that God would damn his soul; but now he felt he *could not pray* that it might be *saved*. He had racked his invention to make the most absurd and wicked oaths, and now he saw them returning upon his own soul, and ready to sink him to that world of woe from which he seemed to have borrowed language to express the wickedness of his heart.

"It is too late—too late for me," was his cry, when urged to repent—"Too late—too late." "He knew his duty, but he did it not." He knew that he was a creature of God, who had a claim to his obedience. He knew that his laws were holy, just, and good, and that he had wilfully broken them, and incurred the penalty. "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

*Reader*, is it yet "too late" for you? Are you still in your sins? Is it nothing to you that God your Maker claims your obedience and love? Is it nothing to you that the Redeemer has died, and that "he that believeth" in him "shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned?"

Are you a profane swearer? "Be sure your sin will find you out." Have you ever prayed God to "*damn your soul*?" He has heard that prayer, and it may be, he will answer it according to your request. And now let me seriously ask you, can you calmly repeat the impious prayer you have so often uttered? *Can you do it? Dare you do it?* Are you so hardened in sin that you can deliberately pray for "*damnation*?"

Think, what is it to be damned—to be cast off from God, from happiness, from heaven, and cast down to hell the prison of despair? Think, too, that this will be eternal. God hath said, "The wicked shall go away into *everlasting punishment*, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Do you plead as an excuse for swearing, that you do it *thoughtlessly*, that you have acquired the *habit*, and now you hardly know when you swear? This is a dreadful acknowledgement that you constantly break the command, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," that

it has become habitual. You thus acknowledge that you care not for the command, and defy the penalty.

Do you say that you only swear when you are *in a passion*? Do you offer this as an excuse? Will you carry up this excuse to the judgment of the great God, before whom you must answer for "every idle word?" Will you tell *him* that you broke his commands thoughtlessly, habitually, and when you were in a passion; or do you hope to escape the notice of Omniscience? Think not that in that immense assembly when all who have lived shall stand before the Judge, you may be overlooked or passed by unobserved. O no. He who numbers the hairs of your head; whose eyes, as a flame of fire, have been fixed upon you during all your wayward course; who has often warned you by his providence, his ministers, his Spirit, and by your own conscience; who has borne with you patiently, it may be twenty, thirty, or fifty years; he will not let you escape. The mountains will not heed your call, nor the hills cover you "from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Now, fellow-sinner, what will you do? Conscience whispers that you are verily guilty. What then will you do? Come to a decision. Will you continue this senseless, absurd, wicked practice of swearing; or will you break off from this, and all other sins, and lead a life of obedience to all the commands of your Maker? Will you throw aside this Tract, which pleads with you, as a man with his friend, to think of these things as you will wish you had done when you come to die? Will you deliberately crowd these considerations out of mind, and pursue the same downward course? Will you, when your eternal all is at stake, throw away your soul? Throw it away! Where? Into the cold, dark, cheerless gulf of annihilation? This you cannot do. You cannot cease to exist. O no. If you repent not, you wilfully throw your soul into that boundless, unfathomable abyss where no sound is heard save "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for ever."

H Y M N .

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SEE th' Eternal Judge descending—  
View him seated on his throne!  
Now poor sinner, now lamenting,  
Stand and hear thy awful doom—  
Trumpets call thee!  
Stand and hear thy awful doom.

Hear the cries he now is venting,  
Fill'd with dread of fiercer pain;  
While in anguish thus lamenting,  
That he ne'er was born again,  
Greatly mourning,  
That he ne'er was born again.

"Yonder sits my slighted Saviour,  
With the marks of dying love;  
Oh, that I had sought his favor,  
When I felt his Spirit move—  
Golden moments,  
When I felt his Spirit move."

Now, despisers, look and wonder!  
Hope and sinners here must part,  
Louder than a peal of thunder,  
Hear the dreadful sound, "Depart!"  
Lost for ever,  
Hear the dreadful sound, "Depart!"

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